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John B.
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CONSOLATION to the MOURNER,

A N D

Instruction both to Youth and Old Age, &c.

I N

T W O DISCOURSES.

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*Consolation to the Mourner, and Instruction both
to Youth and Old Age, from the early
Death of the Righteous:*

I N
T W O D I S C O U R S E S :

BY
S A M U E L C O O P E R , D . D .
MINISTER OF GREAT YARMOUTH.

Occasioned by the
D E A T H of his eldest D A U G H T E R ,
(Who had only just entered into her twenty-first year)
TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED,
A N A P P E N D I X :
CONTAINING
Her C H A R A C T E R ,
And two ELEGIES on her Death.

Y A R M O U T H :
Printed and Sold by D O W N E S and M A R C H , and
may be had of Messrs. Robinsons, and Becket, London.

M . D C C . LXXXVI .



DEDICATION.

To the Right Reverend Father in God,

L E W I S,

L O R D B I S H O P o f N O R W I C H .

My Lord,

FORGIVE my inscribing the
following Discourses to your
Lordship, without first requesting
your permission.

iv DEDICATION.

I must frankly acknowledge, that it was the fear of not obtaining your consent, which prevented me from asking it. For, as I thought the account of so perfect a human creature as HER,—whose death was the melancholy occasion of the following tribute to her memory,—ought to be presented to the most perfect living character I knew, I wished to say so to the public,—and I was afraid, had you previously known my intention,—your humility would have prevented its execution.

The

DEDICATION. v

The following Discourses, my Lord, are likewise the best answer I can give to your's and Mrs. BAGOT's very kind, and, I must say, friendly enquiry after Mrs. COOPER and myself, under the first pressure of our affliction.

That every happiness may attend you, and that you may long be lent to earth as an example,— before you are translated to heaven as your reward, is our sincere wish, and ardent prayer.

vi DEDICATION.

I am, my Lord, with the truest
respect, and liveliest esteem,

Your Lordship's

most obedient,

and affectionate humble Servant,

S. COOPER.

PREFACE.

P R E F A C E.

To shock the prejudices of the vulgar, whether learned or unlearned, must be the lot of every writer, whose publications are the produce of his own thoughts. The author, therefore, doubts not, but that some of his sentiments, both in the following Discourses, and in the Notes, will be attacked with all the fury of criticism, and reprobated with all the indignation,

viii P R E F A C E.

dignation, which arises from an attachment to generally received opinions. To learn, therefore, to condemn censure, and to be contented with the conscious rectitude of his intentions, are as absolutely necessary to him, who, amidst the discordant opinions of mankind, would invariably pursue truth, as to him, who, in the opposite relations of life, would uniformly preserve integrity. And, as the author does not send the following Discourses into the world to add to his own reputation,
but

but to impart instruction to others;—though envy may hiss, it cannot wound:—and even malice will be disappointed in the expectation, of glutting herself with another's pain.

If the world will agree to allow, which, I must confess, I can not conceive it possible they should deny, that the example of the deceased ought to be publickly known, for the publick benefit, and that this work is calculated to promote the cause of true religion,—

x P R E F A C E.

ligion,—the author will receive the gratification he most covets from the publication,—as a writer;—and derive even additional consolation under his loss,—as a parent.

D I S C O U R S E

DISCOURSE I.

The WISDOM of SOLOMON,

Chapter iv. Verses xiii. xiv.

*He being made perfect in a short time,
fulfilled a long time. For his soul
pleased the Lord: therefore hastened
he to take him away from among the
wicked.*

WERE it possible, it would not
be important to determine, who
was the real writer of that excellent
book, from which I have selected
my text. Who he was not, is indeed
manifest. For though it bears the
name of Solomon, it undoubtedly was

A

not

4 D I S C O U R S E I.

not the production of that illustrious monarch. But, however obscure the author himself might be, his work certainly would not diminish the celebrity of the wise king of Israel, but might even add new lustre to his fame. For so excellently does it expose the absurdity of Pagan worship, and so admirably does it display the power of the true God, and vindicate his justice and goodness, in all his dispensations, that I most earnestly recommend the whole of it, to your very frequent perusal, and most attentive consideration.

In the verses preceding my text, the writer makes this declaration; "that
" the

DISCOURSE I. 3

"the children of the ungodly shall not thrive, but that they shall be rooted out." He then proceeds to vindicate the righteous appointment of God, in sometimes terminating likewise within a very short period, the lives even of those, who have understandings soon enlightened with wisdom, and hearts early enriched with goodness.

A subject, which could not fail to attract the attention of his readers. For what parent or friend is there, who wants not more than ordinary consolation, when they are lamenting the death of one, in whom, youth was united with piety, and virtue? And

6 DISCOURSE I.

who that possesses any of the tender feelings of humanity,—though he be no relative nor friend,—can withhold the sympathetic tear,—when such an one sinks,—as it is tenderly, though unjustly called,—untimely to the tomb?

Youth, manhood, and even old age itself, beholds one of either sex, when advanced in years, borne along to the grave, without any *addition* to the regret, which, admiration, gratitude, or love for the deceased, may inspire. On the contrary, upon such an event, even an *alleviation* of sorrow arises, from the consideration, that God had indulged the friends of the deceased, with so long a continuance of the blessings

DISCOURSE I. 7

blessings, imparted by the protraction of their lives. Piety, therefore, unites with gratitude, to recognize in the event, the MERCY of God; though, humanity drops tears of affection upon the bier. We consider their decline, and at length, our total deprivation of them, in somewhat a similar point of view, with that of the declension of the sun, at the close of a delightful day, in autumn, or in winter. Being led by a knowledge of the course of nature previously to expect it, we acquiesce in the event, as part of the regular administration of an all-gracious Providence.

But, when we see, any one cut off by

3 DISCOURSE I.

by a sudden disease, in all the purple bloom of youth ;—the sensation we experience,—though much stronger in degree, is similar in kind,—to that we feel,—when having beheld the spring diffusing verdure over the ground,—opening the bud of every tree and flower,—and adorning the whole face of nature, with one beauteous blush of variegated bloom,—we also see it suddenly blighted by a bitter blast ;—which at once not only withers all its beauty, but destroys all our hopes of future comfort. Of that comfort, we had reason to expect, and which we fondly flattered ourselves we should enjoy,—from the fruits,—summer would bring forth, and autumn would mature.

As

DISCOURSE I.

As the poignancy of our disappointments, is always in proportion to the ardour of our hopes, we seem to be defrauded of that, to which we fancied we had a right; and are ready to arraign the justice of Providence, in only mocking us, as it were, with the prospect of blessings, he did not mean we should enjoy. We almost consider God, as interrupting the usual benevolent course of nature, and as exerting an extraordinary power, for no other purpose, but to thwart our wishes, and frustrate our expectations.

Such are too frequently, the first
PAGAN reflections of our souls. But
if we will attend to the author of the
Book

10 DISCOURSE I.

Book of Wisdom, HE will soon teach us to discard such folly.

The consolation HE imparts to ALL, whose souls are oppressed with grief, for the loss of a child,—adorned with every outward accomplishment,—and resplendent with every mental grace,—must have been PECULIARLY acceptable to the JEWS. For they, having the knowledge of a future state only very darkly shadowed forth to them, looked more particularly for the reward of their virtue, in the enjoyment of worldly blessings ; and the punishment of their crimes in the sufferance of temporal calamities.

These

DISCOURSE I. 11

These indeed, were the only allurements to obedience, and deterrents from disobedience, which were PLAINLY and IMMEDIATELY PROMULGATED to them by God himself. This is manifest, even from the ten commandments. For in the fifth, (which from our translators mistake of the meaning of the apostle, is erroneously called, the first commandment with promise) children were enjoined, "to honour their fathers and their mothers, that their days might be long in the land, which the Lord their God had given them".*

B

Num-

* It appears wonderful, that the translators should have thus rendered the words of St. Paul, in the fifth chap-

12 DISCOURSE I.

Numberless other passages might be quoted from the OLD TESTAMENT,

chapter of the Ephesians, when it must have been evident to them, that by so doing, they made the apostle assert, what was not true. For the SECOND commandment was certainly the *first*, *with PROMISE*, and therefore, though the *fifth* might be the CHIEF, it could not be the FIRST. This alteration in the translation will, then, at once vindicate the apostle. But could I produce any decisive authorities, in this case, for placing the preposition in Greek, between the adjective and substantive, I should still prefer another translation. The translators have themselves, in the first chapter of the first epistle of St. John, at the fifth verse, rendered the same word, MESSAGE, which, in the Ephesians, they rendered, PROMISE. And certainly, the laws of the TWO TABLES, which Moses brought from God, are very properly called, the first message, or declaration, from God. But, the word, likewise, signifies *mandate*, *order*, or *command*, from a law-giver, or any person in authority. Therefore, in this passage, in the Ephesians, the apostle,

DISCOURSE I. 13

in which, length of days, and a multitude of children, were either confi-

dered
to the parents, and the parents to the children.

apostle, after this exhortation, “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right;*” quotes the commandment, “*Honour thy father, and thy mother,*” and then says, if

πρωτὴ may refer to επαγγέλμα
as the following words might be translated, “*which is a precept, in the first command,—or mandate.*”

The apostle, indeed, subjoins the promise, which was annexed to the keeping of this commandment, by the *Jews*. Not, however, (as I believe the learned and ingenious Samuel Clark has before observed) with a design to induce *Christians* to hope for the same reward, but merely for the sake of shewing the authority, upon which, the precept was founded, by quoting the whole of it from the Decalogue.

If any one still choose to render the Greek word, by the English word, *promise*,—that will still vindicate

24 DISCOURSE I.

dered, or even promised, as the reward of those, who obeyed the precepts of their law-giver. And therefore, Solomon in his Proverbs, speaking of wisdom, describes her, bearing length of days in her right hand, as the greatest of all human blessings; and the inferior gifts, riches and honours, in her left. To the Jews, therefore, an early death must have appeared, not only

as

cate St. Paul, even if my conjectural construction of the sentence may be admitted. It will then stand thus, "which is a commandment, in the first (or former) promise." The apostle calling the Mosaic Revelation the FORMER, and the CHRISTIAN the LATTER, PROMISE. For the same word is in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and the thirty-ninth verse, applied to the new dispensation, which St. Paul, according to this interpretation, in the Ephesians, refers to the old.

DISCOURSE I. 15

as a punishment, but for that reason, as a proof likewise, either of particular undutifulness to parents, or of general impiety towards God.

There may, perhaps, be some likewise amongst us, who have their minds tinctured with a faint belief of the same opinion; because they have never considered, or at least, not maturely weighed, the different natures of the promises, made in the Mosaic, and in the Christian dispensations.†

Neither

† It is by no means intended in this place, to adopt, and disseminate the notions of *Bishop Warburton*, upon this subject. The author's own sentiments, upon that point, are well known to the literary world, by his

16 DISCOURSE I.

Neither does time permit, nor does my subject require me, to enter at present, into a full explanation, of the specific differences, in the two institutions. Let it suffice only to observe,

that

his "*Letter to the Bishop of Gloucester*," in which, the whole of the Bishop's visionary, though splendid, edifice, is overturned from the foundation. And of which, a new edition is intended to be published, when the new edition of his Lordship's Works shall be ushered into the world. That the Old Testament did contain a discovery of a future state, our Saviour has himself declared, from whose authority there can be no appeal; and he has accused all who hold the contrary opinion, as erring "*because they know not the Scriptures*." The reason why such a doctrine was not made the sanction to their laws, may be seen in the author's Commencement Sermon, before the University of Cambridge, entitled, "*The necessity and truth of the THREE PRINCIPAL REVELATIONS demonstrated, from the gradations of science, and the progress of the mental faculties*."

DISCOURSE I. 17

that temporal rewards and punishments were individually the sanctions of the Jewish laws, so long as that people retained any national obedience, to their king and law-giver. But when they had degenerated into an almost total forgetfulness of **HIM**, then ceased all their temporal prosperity, both collectively and individually ; and they served but for plunder, and for a prey to the neighbouring nations. **TEMPORAL HAPPINESS**, therefore, being no longer, the necessary consequence of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**, to a member of the Jewish state, some of them, began more closely to attend to the intimations, their scriptures contained, of a **FUTURE STATE** ; and looked upon death,

as

18 DISCOURSE I.

as the greatest blessing, in giving rest from present trouble, and security against impending danger. Till at length, the measure of their iniquities being full, their state was destroyed; and it's dispersed individuals remain a more striking evidence of the truth of Christianity, by their STUBBORN INFIDELITY, than the whole united nation could have exhibited, by an IMMEDIATE CONVERSION.

The author of the Book of Wisdom, being one of those, who lived in the latter times of the Jewish monarchy, had therefore, for the reason just assigned, and by means likewise of the writings of the latter prophets, his mind

more

DISCOURSE I. 19

more brightly irradiated with the notion of a future state, than those who lived in the earlier times of the theocracy. He therefore, is fully able to dispel all the mists of error, in which the early death of the righteous is involved; and to enable us to see this object with clearness, and to sketch out it's dimensions in their full proportions.

PROLOGUE. *Quoniam regulus editus non est.* W.

To prepare the way for the reception of the truth, the writer meant to exhibit, and the consolation he intended to impart; he begins the foregoing chapter, with observing in general, "that the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and

c

" there

20 DISCOURSE I.

“ there shall be no torment touch
“ them. That in the sight of the un-
“ wise, they seemed to die; and their
“ departure is taken for misery: And
“ their going from us utter destruc-
“ tion;—but, they are in *peace*. For
“ though they be punished in the sight
“ (or imagination) of men;—yet is
“ their hope full of immortality.”

When the author comes, therefore, to the subject of the second chapter, from which, my text is taken,—he introduces it, by saying;—“ Better is it
“ to have *no children*, and to have vir-
“ tue; for the memorial thereof is
“ *immortal*: because it is known with
“ God, and with men. When it is
“ present,

DISCOURSE I. 21

“ present, men take example at it ;
“ and when it is gone, they desire it :
“ it weareth a crown, and triumpheth
“ for ever, having gotten the victory,
“ striving for undefiled rewards.”
Then, after a declaration, that the multiplying brood of the ungodly shall not thrive, he says, “ But, though the “ righteous be prevented with death,
“ yet, shall *he* be in rest.”

He next proceeds, to rectify the mistake,—which men entertain concerning length of days, and the true honour of human life. For, says he
“ honourable age, is *not* that which
“ standeth in *length of time*, nor that,
“ which is measured by *number* of

22 DISCOURSE I.

" years. But, *wisdom*, is the *gray hair*
" unto men; and an *unspotted life*, is
" *old age*." Teaching us,—that length
of days is only valuable, as means
afforded us, of improving in wisdom,
(*i. e.* religion) for that is the only
certain wisdom; and that whoever, of
either sex, has already acquired that
blessing,—has,—however young,—
likewise attained to old age.

An assertion, which does not more
arrest our attention, by the spirit of
the expression, than it approves itself
to our reason, by the force of it's truth.
Because, it is evident, that such a
person is already possessed of the only
end to the individual, for which old
age

age is given, and all the honour and happiness an human being can acquire.

When such an one, therefore, dies, the writer tells us, "he pleased God, and was beloved of him: so that living amongst sinners, he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of naughtiness, doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of concupiscence, doth undermine, (or pervert) the simple, or pure mind."

Thus does this wise man compare one

24 DISCOURSE II.

one who dies in youth, but who has acquired all the true wisdom of age, to Enoch. Who (as Moses tells us) "walked with God; and he was not," "for God took him." Or, as the apostle to the Hebrews, afterwards more fully informed us; "by *faith*, "Enoch was *translated*, that he should "not see death; and was not found, "because *God had translated him*: for, "before his translation, he had this "testimony,—that *he pleased God*."

The observations of the author of the Book of Wisdom, are likewise, in this place, a comment upon the words of Isaiah.—"The righteous perisheth, "and no man layeth it to heart: and
"mer-

" merciful men (or as the margin has it, men of kindness or godliness) are taken away ; none considering, that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."

He does not, however, by any means, confine the benefit accruing to the righteous, by death, to the single circumstance, which seemed alone to be within the view of the PROPHET. For, this seems to have been only, their deliverance from *those* calamities, which God, in his just vengeance, brings upon a sinful nation. But, the former considers it as a blessing, not only in this light, but likewise, as it secures the person from every possibility of

future

26 DISCOURSE I.

future deviation into sin. Whether such danger might have arisen, either from any internal error, or from the external enticements and snares, of cunning and wicked men. Nay, he even seems still further, to *suggest* at least,—that the operations of that very passion,—to which we owe, all those tender charities—which blend in one common union, all the dear relatives of life,—husband and wife,—parent and child,—brother and sister,—might possibly have perverted their judgment, and undermined their virtue. This effect might, perhaps, have arisen, from suffering one single duty to extend beyond it's just limits, and permitting one partial affection to occupy too

small

large

DISCOURSE I. 27

large a portion of the heart. For, the one, must necessarily weaken piety towards God, and the other, circumscribe benevolence towards man.

But, he proceeds to observe, in the words of my text, that, "He being made perfect, or sanctified, in a short time, fulfilled a long time. For, his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hasted he to take him away from among the wicked."

This assertion, thus delivered by the author of the book of Wisdom, when developed, is found to contain the following declaration: — That God taketh away the *righteous*, — not only,

28 DISCOURSE I.

that they may not be involved in one general calamity with the WICKED,—but likewise, that their *innocence* may not fall a prey to those snares, in which the GUILTY endeavour to entangle the GOOD ;—nor undergo those sufferings, which VIRTUE must frequently sustain in this world, from the prevalence of VICE. For,—what PIETY is there towards God,—however sincere ;—and what BENEVOLENCE towards man,—however unbounded ;—which does not feel, whilst on earth,—some pangs,—from the misrepresentations of SELF-INTEREST,—the violence of IMPLACABILITY,—the underminings of ENVY,—and the machinations of MALICE.

361

But,

But, says the wise man, "this the people saw, and understood it not; neither laid they up this in their minds. That his grace and mercy is with his saints, and that he have respect for his chosen." Or as he observes, in the next chapter;—" How he is numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints."

For want of such a consideration, it is no wonder, that parents were obliged to sustain the afflicting loss of such excellent children, without one ray of consolation; and that they even passed sentence upon the decrees of the Almighty, without one gleam of wisdom.

How

30 DISCOURSE II.

How pitiable was such ignorance! because, how lamentable, as well as absurd, were the opinions, which sprung out of it!—Such I have before called PAGAN THOUGHTS; and so were they rightly denominated.

For, turn to the writings of some of the wisest *heathen* authors, and then determine,—whether, upon such occasions, they can supply you with a reflection, which can afford comfort to a rational being.

Search, for instance, the works of one of the most illustrious Romans,—who was versed in all the learning and philosophy of the Greeks, and an enthu-

DISCOURSE I. 31

enthusiastic admirer of Socrates and Plato,—by far the wisest of all the ancient philosophers.

See his solitary meditations, whilst harrassed with pain, for the loss of his daughter.—Attend to the attempt made to comfort him by a friend. A friend,—for whose understanding, he expressed the greatest veneration, and to whose consolations, he acknowledged himself to be highly obliged.

At the prospect of obtaining, under similar circumstances, such comfort,—from advice given by one so sage,—and received by one so learned,—whose heart would not swell with hope,
and

and whose breast would not expand with expectation?

But, how instantly, will his ardour be damped, and his confidence be repressed;—when he discover the pitiful, and useless source, from which,—the admonition of the advising friend took it's origin, which was to supply consolation to the afflicted father.

Can he forbear to suspect,—that there was an intention of an insult on his understanding,—or of a mockery of his woe,—when he find the monitor of this great man,—in laboured sentences, and with an assumed air of the most solemn gravity,—telling him,—

“ that

DISCOURSE II. 33

" that he ought to suppress his murs,
" as unreasonable,—for the loss
" of a creature of so short-lived a spe-
" cies as woman ;—because,—so many
" great and glorious cities,—though
" they were formed for so much longer
" duration,—were,—notwithstanding
" —tumbled into ruins." *

* Had Tullia's life been as long, as the duration of most cities, and her father had still lamented her death ; there would have been some shadow of common sense, in his friend, Sulpicius's observation. If likewise, the cause of Cicero's lamentation for his daughter, had been,—that she did not live for ever on earth,—another of his observations, (" that if Tullia had not died when she did, yet she must certainly have died in no long space of time afterwards,") would not have been wholly impertinent. But, as the real cause of Cicero's grief, was, because his daughter did not reach the usual period of human life, and that during the course of

34 DISCOURSE II

Consult another of the same nation, whose pride it was, to instruct others, how to treat upon every subject;—and you will see,—that he could find no other topic for declamation, upon the loss of a son, and other similar events,—and could think of no other remaining use for his voice, than to accuse the Gods of envy and injustice, —and to bear witness,—that there is no Providence, which regulates the affairs of the world.

Much

of his own life, he was deprived of the comfort arising from such a daughter;—such puerile declamation as Sulpicius's, ought not to be passed over even in a pupil, by any one qualified to be a school-master, without a severe rebuke for the inanity of it's sentiments, and a marked disapprobation of the sterility of the disclaimer.

Much as your expectations have been hitherto disappointed, yet give not over your researches. There is another writer, who seems to have been an affectionate husband, and a tender father. See what consolation, his writings will supply,—on the death or sickness,—of those we love. He seems to have been a man, at least, less obnoxious to the more furious passions, than either of the former ; though not perhaps less than them, absorbed in vanity ;—the master passion of all their breasts. Him, you will find,—upon such occasions,—retiring to his library, having recourse to his studies for relief. That grief, however, perhaps you will think, could not be very violent, which

86 DISCOURSE

left sufficient attention to the mind, to derive comfort from such a source. You will, however, discover him alleviating his sorrow, likewise, by the hope of immortality.—This, indeed, is worthy of your notice.—But, examine more accurately,—and you will find, —that this was not an immortality of existence in a future state of happiness, —but the inconsistent hope, of an immortality of fame, to be derived from the writings he should leave behind him, in this perishable world.—This idea, incongruous as it is,—being the only notion he seemed to entertain of any immortality. He neither knew,—nor did he seek for further comfort; —though the light of Christianity, had
then

them for some time illuminated the world. But still, such ignorance, it may be urged, however lamentable, might certainly be very pardonable. For it might not proceed from any intentional neglect,—to enquire; but, from the unavoidable want of opportunity, —to know.

This apology, however, can not be admitted. For his very office afforded him occasion for an investigation of the principles of Christianity, and his duty also called upon him to make it. Yet

38 DISCOURSE II

not even the fortitude, with which, he saw Christian principles enable two women to support all the agonies of torture, could induce him to enquire into the cause, by which it produced so noble an effect. But, he contented himself, with relating those sufferings without remorse, which he had caused to be inflicted without pity. The cruelty of the experiment, indeed, served still further to confirm his belief of the PIETY,—(which this enlightened worshipper of the image of Trajan called SUPERSTITION) and likewise of the PURITY,—of the followers of Christ,—of which he had before sufficient reason to be persuaded. But, notwithstanding this conviction,—this

DISCOURSE II. 39

wise man was so content with his ignorance, that he had no further curiosity to examine the soil, nor to enquire into the culture,—which were requisite to the production of such excellent fruits of — Innocence,— Patience,— Devotion,—and Benevolence.

How infinitely more happy would these elegant writers have really been, —even if they had sacrificed some portion of their eloquence to the acquisition of the wisdom, the author of the Book of Wisdom could have communicated ; — and exchanged their hope of immortal fame,—for the immortal consolation,—he could have imparted. He could have poured oil into

48 DISCOURSE II

into their wounds, which would have assuaged the anguish of their pain; and which would likewise have calmed the most tumultuous agitations of their breasts.

But, alas! how had such wisdom, and such consolation been offered, they would not have been accepted. The writer was a Jew:—And as in the haughtiness of their self-sufficiency,—these Lords of human kind,—looked down upon the whole nation with contempt; they would have rejected both the author, and his writings,—with the most scornful disdain.

But how much does the knowledge
of

DISCOURSE A. 45

of the despised Jew,—who drank of the divine waters of Revelation;—exceeded the wisdom,—of the proudest, nay, even of the profoundest Philosopher,—who had drunk deepest of the Pierian spring?

Yet, ignorant as these men were, of a future state, and miserable therefore, as they were, from that ignorance,—that being the great end of all our actions,—and the great source of consolation, under all our present afflictions,—these are the men, who thought themselves most wise,—and are still generally thought so by others. Youth are instructed to look up to them, as the great luminaries of knowledge,
and

42 DISCOURSE I.

and directed to search their works,
night and day, as the grand repositories
of wisdom.*

But

* See Cic. Epist. ad Familiares, l. 4, ep. 5, apud Elzev. Quint. Institut. l. 6. in Proem. Ed. Roll. Plin. Ep. l. 8, ep. 19. l. 9, ep. 3. & l. 10, ep. 97. Ed. Glasg. See also Pliny's beautiful Epistle to Marcellinus, (beautiful as to language) in which he gives an account of the death of Fundanus's daughter. L. 5. ep. 16.

As there are certainly BIGOTS in LEARNING, as well as in RELIGION, the author apprehends, that he shall subject himself to no little severity of censure, for the freedom with which he has treated these classic writers, whom he admires for their elegance, but whom he can not respect for their reasoning. And he must take leave to ask, whether it does not probably arise from the undistinguishing admiration, (in which boys are educated) of the sentiments, as well as language of such writers, that in their more advanced years, they mistake,—FINE SENTENCES for WISE ONES,—OPINIONS for

DISCOURSE I. 43

But, in reference only to a FUTURE STATE, the observation of one of our poets and divines, is strictly true.
" That even as WISE as SOCRATES,
" might justly stand as the definition
" of a modern fool."† In every other respect, indeed, happy would it be for

F them-

for KNOWLEDGE,—LEARNING for WISDOM,—AUTHORITY for ARGUMENT,—and MEMORY for JUDGMENT? Is not this the cause, that they are more delighted with the numerous spawn of a MULTIFARIOUS READING,—than the vigorous offspring of a PIERCING INTELLECT? Does it not from hence proceed, that they even value more highly, that groveling sight,—which wren-like, perceives those objects only, which are most obvious to the view,—than the eagle-ken,—which in it's daring flights,—passing the old,—discover,—new boundaries of science.

† See Dr. Young's Night-Thoughts, Night the 4th.

44 DISCOURSE I.

themselves, and the world, if those, who think themselves modern philosophers, would adopt,—that cautious assent to every proposition,—and anxious inquiry after truth,—which so eminently distinguish the sagacious, yet humble SOCRATES,—and can alone conduct us to REAL KNOWLEDGE. For, pitiable indeed is their state of mind, who rather emulate that greedy appetite for every opinion, and imitate that dogmatic assertion upon points which they have never examined,—which were the characteristics of the inflated, yet insolent SOPHISTS;—and which must always inevitably terminate only,—in a CONCEITED IGNORANCE. The latter, with the dazzling,

but

but evanescent glare of meteors, did but mislead the steps of the unwary traveller, into the abyss of FOLLY. But, the former, with his steady, and all-penetrating rays, like those of the sun, conducted the cautious inquirer along the path, which leads to TRUE WISDOM.*

F 2

All
the
EVIDENCES
of REVELATION,
which are to be
drawn from an INVESTIGATION of the HU-
MAN MIND.

* Let not however the reader imagine, that it is the intention of the author to deny, that Heathen writers had any glimpse of a future state. They all, no doubt, could upon any occasion, which had called for a display of their talents upon such a subject, have said many fine things upon it. Who knows not that Plato and Tully have? How far their knowledge may have reached, will be shown in a future work,—meant to be entitled, *All the EVIDENCES of REVELATION, which are to be drawn from an INVESTIGATION of the HUMAN MIND.* Enough has been already said to show, it was not, at least, one of their sources of consolation, under the loss of children, or of friends.

46 DISCOURSE I.

All which unassisted reason could discern of a future state,—this profoundest philosopher of antiquity, did discover. But, in vain shall we go to him, for a never-failing consolation to our grief. Let us rather turn to one, who, by the aid of Revelation, can afford surer comfort. One, who, though a mere Jew, was wiser than the wisest of the Greeks.

Let us once admit with this wise man,—*not only as a POINT OF SPECULATION*,—but likewise, as a PRINCIPLE OF PRACTICE,—that there is a life after this: — a discovery, — to which he was led, only by a faint and glimmering ray,—but which is now

to

DISCOURSE I. 47

to us fully brought to light by the gospel ;—then,—how do the clouds of sorrow begin to dissipate !—Then,—in how very different a point of view,—do we behold the death of one, linked to us by the ties of friendship,—or even by the united bands of nature, as well as of affection. Even of one, who, in early youth, had acquired all the perfection, which the extremest old age can possibly attain ! How very different are the reflections to which it gives birth, and the sensations which it imparts ! How reconcileable does the event then become with the goodness of God, and how consolatory to the weakness of man !

For then it appears, that those of

18 DISCOURSE I.

either sex, who die in the bloom of youth, matured in every habit of piety and virtue,—are so far from being untimely snatched away, as some profanely talk,—that they are removed from earth,—because,—they are the peculiar favourites of heaven.

It then appears, it is for *ourselves*, not *them*, we ought to grieve; not, however, according to the well-known expression, even common, and therefore thought vulgar amongst *Christians*,—merely, because our loss is their gain;—but, because their *trial* is completed, and *we* are not yet *perfected*.

For can we lament death, as the most dreadful calamity to them, to

DISCOURSE I. 49

whom it is in reality the highest blessing? Shall we, if we love them, grieve that they are removed from all further possibility of misery, to everlasting happiness? Shall we make their virtues,—which are the foundation of their bliss,—the occasion of our mourning?—And shall we impiously accuse God of unkindness;—because he loves, and early rewards that perfection,—on which we doated;—but which we had it not in our power, to bless according to it's merit?

No. Let us rather bend in humble thankfulness to God, for his goodness,—in securing to THEM never-ending happiness;—and in votchsaing them to

50 DISCOURSE I.

to be the means to us,—of the most precious instructions.

To our thanksgiving, let us join fervent supplication, that we too may live the life, and die the death of the righteous; and that our latter end, may be like their's.

What other behaviour can possibly become us upon such an occasion?

For, is there a parent,—a Christian parent, I mean,—so totally unaccustomed to all meditation on the joys promised to the righteous in heaven,—that he would wish a darling child to return from the fruition of such hap-

DISCOURSE I. 51

happiness,—to the participation of even the highest degree of virtuous bliss,—which it is possible to enjoy on earth?

No. Forbid it piety! Forbid it affection!

Rather let parents show their love to their deceased children,—by acting in such a manner,—as will most surely engage the continuance of their children's love to them, even now they are removed to the mansions of eternal rest. Let them, as the most effectual means to this end, aspire to the attainment of that perfection, of which their angel children are receiving the reward.

52 DISCOURSE I.

ward. Let them so assimilate themselves to them in purity here,—that *they* may likewise, “ come hereafter “ to the heavenly Jerusalem, and an “ innumerable company of angels ; “ to the general assembly, and church “ of the first born, which are written “ in heaven ; and to God the judge “ of all ; and to the spirits of just “ men made perfect ; and to Jesus “ the mediator of a new covenant.”

And oh !—if they may,—without deceiving themselves,—indulge the elevating hope,—that *they* were,—under Providence,—the happy, though humble instruments, of first directing the attention of a child whilst on earth,

DISCOURSE I. 53

earth,—to those principles and habits,—by which,—with God's grace,—and her own unremitting endeavours,—she so early attained to perfection, and is now exalted in heaven ;—how much must their grief for the temporary loss of her society, be abridged in the self-gratulation,—which that thought excites.

How much must it likewise invigorate their endeavours,—to train up in the same path,—the rest of the children committed to their care ;—that they may render them likewise, patterns of perfection,—and so become the instruments of still further blessings to mankind ?—How much

54 DISCOURSE I.

present happiness must it afford them, to think,—that they are so nurturing their FAMILY ON EARTH,—as to render it, a little SEMINARY, for FURNISHING INHABITANTS TO HEAVEN?

With what joy, may they then look forward to their own departure, for that blessed region,—where they will be sure of meeting those beloved objects,—they have sent before them, and receive those, which are to follow them?—With what ecstasy, will such parents and such children,—such brothers and such sisters,—welcome each other to the celestial abodes? How rapturously will they enfold each other, in the warm embrace of love and gra-

DISCOURSE I. 55

gratitude?—Of gratitude, which must spring from the sense of the mutual aid and assistance, and of the mutual happiness they have imparted to each other.—Of love,—which, perfection must reciprocally kindle, towards perfection.—With what fervency of devotion, will they approach the presence of their FATHER, REDEEMER, and SANCTIFIER, who has thus united them to each other,—never again to be separated, nor to know sorrow, or pain, any more,—through all the endless ages of eternity?

This thought,—like the mid-day sun, bursting through a cloud, and exhaling every vapour;—must at once disperse

56 DISCOURSE I.

disperse their tears, and diffuse joy and gladness through their hearts. For what hope can be so elevating ? What trust so gladsome ?—as that of being partakers with those we best love, of an uninterrupted felicity, in a state of eternal existence.—What association can be so perfect ? What union so delightful ?—as forming with those most dear to us,—a part of the family in heaven,—who are permitted to live in the continual presence of their Father and our Father,—of their God and our God ?

If, whilst walking in this land of shadows,—we can thus keep the eye of FAITH stedfastly fixed upon the city

city of the Living God,—and looking up to our departed children,—we can esteem them,—as the best treasures we have hitherto *there* laid up ;—and make them, as it were,—the hostages of our own future perseverance in unspotted holiness ;—though we may sometimes drop an involuntary tear,—or breathe a momentary sigh.—Yet will our hearts be *there* also. We shall then consider that space of life, which may still remain to us,—only as a short and narrow *isthmus*,—which joins this world to the next. We shall indeed sometimes look back with anxiety, to see whether those children we leave behind, are following us, though with slow, yet steady steps, through

58 DISCOURSE I.

through the storms and tempests they have to encounter, amidst the perpetual changes of this *sublunary atmosphere*. But, we shall press forward with increasing ardour, towards that happy region, which some of our children have reached before us;—where,—“God will wipe all tears from “our eyes,” where, “all things are “new;”—to live for ever united in that blessed “city,” the heart of man can not conceive,—“which has no need “of the sun, neither of the moon, to “shine in it,—for the GLORY of GOD “ENLIGHTENS IT, and the LAMB is “the LIGHT thereof, for there shall be “no NIGHT there.”

Such

DISCOURSE II. 59

Such are the consolations, which may irradiate the minds, even of parents themselves,—when they feel the pangs,—which nature,—human nature must feel, for the loss of those,—who being made perfect in a short time,—fulfilled a long time. Such is the comfort,—which must necessarily arise from the consideration,—that their children pleased the Lord, and therefore he hastened to take them away.

But let others likewise, diligently attend to the means,—by which they may be made perfect, and so please the Lord.

To this purpose, let me first address

60 D I S C O U R S E II

the young,—whose morning of life is not perhaps even so far advanced as her's,—in whose conduct they had the happiness, so lately to behold,—a complete model of living perfection. Let me beseech them, to employ all the activity of their minds, and to exert all the energies of their nature,—in endeavouring, to transfuse a copy of that model,—into their own lives.

Let me exhort and intreat those likewise, who are already advanced into the evening of life, whose day is far spent,—to be devoutly thankful,—that so long a time has been allotted them, by an all-gracious Providence ; who is willing that all should repent,
—and

DISCOURSE I: 61

—and, “ come in the unity of the faith unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Let me beseech them, to rouse themselves from the torpor which creeps upon them, and to attend to the MEANS, by which such perfection may be attained ; before, they sink into the slumber, of eternal rest. Let me beseech them to complete their labour, whilst the day lasts ; lest the night, which ought to have been so long expected, should even at length, come unexpectedly upon them, and in which they will be no longer able to work, and all further device, wisdom, and knowledge,—will be of no avail.

62 DISCOURSE I.

These MEANS, with the aid of God's grace, I intend to point out to you in my next discourse, not only from PRECEPT, but likewise from the EXAMPLE, of that BLESSED SPIRIT,— who lately departed from amongst us.

In the mean time, let me beseech all of you, my brethren, deeply to imprint upon your memories,—the observation,—with which,—the excellent author of the Book of Wisdom,—concludes the subject to which my text relates; that you may not be of the number of those,—who will receive the condemnation, he denounces. His words are these. "Thus " the righteous that is dead, shall

" con-

DISCOURSE I. 63

"condemn the UNGODLY which are
"LIVING, and YOUTH that is SOON
"PERFECTED, the MANY YEARS and
"OLD AGE of the UNRIGHTEOUS."

DISCOURSE II.

DIRECORIES

"*comptroller's report - a reply to
Division and South Unit of the
Department of Natural Resources
"applies to the State of Oregon.*"

DIRECORIES II

"*comptroller's report - a reply to
Division and South Unit of the
Department of Natural Resources
"applies to the State of Oregon.*"

~~and shall be following them unto~~

~~the world's end,~~

~~Amis god a ballifull."~~

DISCOURSE II.

The WISDOM of SOLOMON,

Chapter iv. Verse xvi.

Thus the righteous that is dead, shall condemn the ungodly which are living; and youth that is soon perfected, the many years, and old age, of the unrighteous.

IN my former discourse, I principally suggested,—the CONSOLATIONS,—which friends,—and even parents may apply,—to assuage that poignant grief,—which human nature must feel,—for the loss of one “ who

“ being

66 DISCOURSE II.

“ being made perfect in a short time,
“ fulfilled a long time.”

I shew, that the death of such a person, was far, very far from being a mark of God's displeasure, as the Jews, in the early periods of their constitution, might reasonably conclude;—and as others, who misunderstand the Old Testament, might at all times, erroneously suppose. For, that on the contrary,—it was,—for this very reason,—because,—
“ such a soul *pleased* the Lord,—
“ that he hasted to take it away,
“ from among the wicked. So per-
“ fect a creature, pleased God, and
“ was beloved of him;—so that
“ being

DISCOURSE II. 67

"being among sinners, — she was
"translated."

From hence then it follows, that all those unjust, and impious complaints against Providence,—which, upon such occasions, were so frequently uttered by antient heathens, and which are also so likely to occur to modern free-thinkers,—can never consistently break forth from the mouth of one, who has any belief in Natural Religion ; nor, surely even find entrance into the thoughts of one, who has any faith in Divine Revelation. For, it is evident, that the death of the early righteous, in all the bloom of youth,—is no more

68 DISCOURSE II;

immature,—than of those,—who expire in the extremest winter of old age.

False then, and absurd, is the comparison of them to trees,—which having put forth their blossoms only, are at once blasted, by a killing frost. With some propriety indeed, they might be compared,—were not every similitude to the choicest productions of inanimate nature, a dégradation of the excellence of such exalted beings,—to those young, but vigorous plants, which bring forth fruits in the midst of blossoms ; but are notwithstanding,—transplanted into a more fertile, and more kindred soil,
—there

DISCOURSE II. 69

—there to expand with new vigour,—to bloom with added beauty,—to bear more delicious fruits—and to be secure from all decay, to the utmost extent of their possible duration.

I intend now, to point out, the INSTRUCTION, which may be reaped from the Wise Man's observations, upon an event, which, though so happy for the deceased, is still so melancholy to the survivors. And, oh ! may God, be graciously pleased to vouchsafe such ability to the preacher,—such attention in his hearers,—and such efficacy to his doctrine,—that none of you, my brethren, may be among the number of those who are

70 DISCOURSE II.

living ; who shall be condemned by the righteous that is dead, nor your many years, and old age, by youth, that is soon perfected.

The author of the Book of Wisdom had before proved,—as I have already observed to you,—that “honourable age, is not that, which, standeth in length of time; nor that which is measured by number of years; “but WISDOM, is the GRAY HAIR unto men, and an UNSPOTTED LIFE, is OLD AGE.”

From whence it follows, that old age, is not to be considered, as a good in itself,—but only, as capable of

DISCOURSE II. 71

of being a blessing,—when it is employed by men, as the means, for which it was intended by God,—to *their* acquisition of true honour, by their increase in true wisdom.

Secondly, that the acquisition of wisdom, is the only mean, by which, we can please the Lord ; and by which, therefore, when taken out of this life, we can be numbered among the children of God, and have our lot among the saints.

From hence then, it is evident, that the Wise Man, uses the term, —WISDOM,—only, as another name, for,—RELIGION. For, THAT ALONE
can

72 DISCOURSE II.

can render every age honourable and happy ;—that alone, can please God, and entitle us to receive from him, “ a glorious kingdom, and a “ beautiful crown, from the Lord’s “ right hand.”

But, having taken the author of the Book of Wisdom, thus far, for our guide ;—here, we must bid adieu to him. For, he could direct us, only to the Books of the Law and the Prophets, for our instruction in Religion, or the information, of what we ought to know, and to practice, —as means, to these great ends.

But thanks,—eternal thanks be to
God,—

DISCOURSE II. 73

God,—that He has vouchsafed *us*, through his ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, still clearer declarations of his will, and consequently, a more complete knowledge of our duty.—He has, by HIM, called us, to higher degrees of perfection ; but at the same time, has given us, fuller assurances of his divine assistance.—He has directed us, to walk by a more pure, and a more spiritual rule of life ; but at the same time, encouraged us to perseverance, by the most animating rewards, and guarded us from deviation, by the most terrific punishments.—Still however most graciously condescending to the infirmities of human nature,—He has, through the
death

74 DISCOURSE II.

death of his Son, promulgated pardon to those, who by a sincere repentance, forsake all sin, and with earnest endeavours, strive to perfect themselves, in every virtue.

It is therefore, to the sacred books of the NEW TESTAMENT, and the best expositors of them, you must have recourse, for the attainment of THAT WISDOM, both in theory, and in practice, which can enable you to go on to PERFECTION, and obtain the approbation of God;— which can render you fit to be taken away by him, from among the wicked, and translated by him amongst his saints.

If

DISCOURSE II. 75

If then, any writings deserve the honour of being deposited in caskets of inestimable value,—as some have been preserved ;—they are surely, these,—which are written by the INSPIRATION OF GOD, for the INSTRUCTION OF ALL MANKIND.

If there be any works,—which ought to be our constant study, both by day and by night,—as the instructors of our early years, have exhorted us to make some,—what are they, which can be placed in competition, with the records of INFINITE LOVE, and the precepts of UNERRING WISDOM ?

K

If,

76 DISCOURSE II.

If, we are anxious for the preservation, and unwearied in the inspection of those writings,—which instruct us to estimate the accounts of our temporal gains and losses;—what time,—care,—attention,—and solicitude, ought we not to bestow upon those,—by which, we may learn best to appreciate, and rightly to adjust,—not only our temporal,—but likewise, our eternal interests?

If we ourselves most eagerly examine,—and spare likewise no labour to consult, nor expence to induce those who are better qualified than ourselves, to scrutinize the deeds,—which set forth,—our right,—title,—claim,

DISCOURSE II. 77

claim,—or pretence, to any earthly riches,—rank,—honours,—or possessions;—with how much more avidity, ought we ourselves to search the records,—and with how much more anxiety, ought we to enquire of others,—who are still better instructed,—the means, by which we may attain to the ACQUISITION OF HEAVENLY TREASURES;—the right by which we may claim an ETERNAL CROWN OF GLORY;—and the TITLE we can set up,—to be ranked with the SONS OF GOD,—and JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST.

If such be really your sentiments, of the importance of the sacred

78 DISCOURSE III.

books,—and such be your diligence and zeal in understanding them,—then you need not fear, that the righteous who is dead, will condemn you, who are living.

But, alas ! how much reason have we to lament,—a total difference in the general conduct of mankind ;—The objects,—which are nearest the eye, though small in magnitude, and fugitive in their existence,—occupy their heads, and captivate their hearts. Whilst those, which are more remote,—though infinite in their importance, and eternal in their duration,—seldom arrest their attention, and still less frequently win their regard.

For,

DISCOURSE II. 79

For, may I not safely pronounce,—not only without any danger of error,—but likewise, without any fear of offence ;—that many even of those here present, many in comparison of the whole,—have never yet seriously asked themselves the question,—
“WHAT SHALL I DO TO BE
“SAVED ?”

Or at least, that few, very few, in consequence of the awful impression, which the vast importance of the question is, by it's very nature, fitted to excite,—have ever sedulously set themselves to enquire for an answer, where only, that inquiry can infal-

80 DISCOURSE II.

infallibly be satisfied ;—I mean in the books of the New Testament, and in the discourses and expositions of the best divines.

In every other art, science, or profession,—the best works are attentively and carefully read,—instructors are diligently and eagerly sought. But, in the momentous points of Religion,—which equally concern us all,—and in which, our well-being, both here as well as hereafter, is most materially involved ;—does not daily experience too mournfully convince,—that the inquiry is by multitudes totally neglected, and when not

DISCOURSE II. 81

not altogether omitted, is still by multitudes much too negligently performed.*

Were

* I know of no work, which more irresistibly evinces the necessity, of a constant, and invariable habit, of attention to our duty, than Dr. Johnson's *MEDITATIONS and PRAYERS*. Such indeed, is the uncommon excellence of most of the Prayers, that the most elevated encomium, can scarcely rise above their merit. But, when the fervid partiality of his friends, take occasion from this work, to recommend his LIFE as an EXAMPLE,—they sacrifice to the attachment of friendship, the instruction they owe to the world. The history he there gives of his own imperfections, reflects indeed the highest honour on his candour, and freedom from self-partiality. But, the same qualities, I am sure, would have induced him, if he had himself published the work, to desire the world, to have taken the INSTABILITY of his LIFE for a WARNING, rather than to have proposed it as an OBJECT of IMITATION. The work most prominently, but most melancholily sets forth, the effects which must always arise, from an INFREQUENCY in STUDYING

82 DISCOURSE II.

Were men,—but half as solicitous,
to recommend themselves to the fa-
vour

DYING our DUTY, and in FORMING PIOUS RESOLUTIONS, from the want, of a CAREFUL EXAMINATION of the EVIDENCES, and of an UNIFORM PERFORMANCE of the INSTRUMENTAL DUTIES of RELIGION. Where the one is seldom performed, and the other often neglected, by a mind, conscious, of the importance, and impressed with a lively sense of the obligations of both,—only two consequences can follow. These are, a *bigotted attachment to such opinions*, as a *pious education instilled*, and a *superstitious attention to certain ritual observances*, in lieu of those inward principles, which Christianity enjoins.

These observations, my respect for the memory of the deceased would have induced me to conceal, had not the injudicious zeal of his friends rendered it a duty I owe to others, to publish them. Happy would it be for the world, if some sagacious writer would undertake to eradicate all the weeds of *superstition, bigotry, and partiality*, (without injuring

DISCOURSE II. 83

vour of the KING of KINGS, as they are to court the smiles of EARTHLY PRINCES ;—were they but half as anxious to merit the approbation of God, as to covet the applause of men ;—were they, but half as anxious,—to qualify themselves, to become the subjects of the kingdom of heaven, as to PRESERVE or REFORM the constitutions of human governments ;—were they but

L

half

injuring the flowers) from the works of this truly learned and ingenious writer. Then, without any mixture of disgust, they would excite all the admiration they are so well fitted to call forth, and without any alloy of weakness, uniformly serve the cause of Virtue and Religion, which it was undoubtedly the sincere wish of their author to promote.

84 DISCOURSE II.

half as eager,—to fit themselves to
to live hereafter, in the society of
“ JUST MEN MADE PERFECT, and
“ WITH JESUS THE MEDIATOR OF
“ A BETTER COVENANT,”—as to
unite themselves with the motley par-
ties, who hope ministerially to direct
the reins of empire here;—were
men but half as unwearied in love
and charity towards others, as they
are in pursuit of their own interest
or pleasures;—were they but half
as ready to weep with those who
weep, and to rejoice with those who
rejoice,—as they are to joy in ano-
ther’s ill success, and to envy another’s
prosperity,—to slander another’s re-
putation, or to misinterpret his words
and

DISCOURSE III. 85

and actions;—then,—instead of the rancorous dissentions, and implacable animosities, with which, fellow-creatures, and fellow-christians, are now continually enraged against each other;—all the fury of their passions would subside into a perfect calm:—peace would become the inmate of every breast:—love would unite to each other in her silken bands, all the different nations,—sects,—parties,—and denominations of mankind.—Then,—even in this cave or dungeon of the universe,—we should catch some echoed strains of an heavenly harmony, inspiring such emotions,—as are the necessary preludes to the full chorus of eternal joys.

86 DISCOURSE II.

But even of those,—who *are* stricken with the infinite importance of knowing,—how they are so to pass through things temporal, as finally not to lose those which are eternal;—few are there, who seem to think, that this is the knowledge of the ONE THING NEEDFUL,—which ought to be constantly present to the mind,—as the end of all their plans,—and the motive of all their actions.

Present happiness,—and present happiness alone,—is the grand object of their pursuit;—and they seek for the means to future felicity,—only so far, as the apprehension of future misery,

DISCOURSE II. 87

miserie,—would lessen the enjoyment of present pleasure.—They do not seem to have learned,—that they are “*first* to seek the kingdom of God, “and his righteousness;”—and that then,—the necessaries and comforts of life, will be added unto them. But, eager in the pursuits of such objects, as afford constant gratifications to the passions of AMBITION, —AVARICE,—FAME,—PRIDE,—or VANITY,—whichever it is,—or whatever the union of them may be,—to which, they point their desires, for the attainment of earthly happiness;—they perform only such parts of duty, as either flow from, or are consistent with these pursuits;—

if

88 DISCOURSE II.

if at all anxious about another life,—seeking rather to avoid future misery, than to obtain future happiness.

—Thus are they totally strangers to that calm and tranquil state of enjoyment,—which is the necessary consequence of a firm trust in the unerring rectitude of the disposer of all events;—and of a joyful confidence in that eternal felicity,—which is the promise,—of an all-sufficient Saviour.†

But

† See this point further insisted upon, in a little tract, by the author of these Discourses,—intitled,
—“AN ADDRESS to PERSONS AFTER
“CONFIRMATION.” Which, though more im-
mediately addressed to the young, the author hopes
he may, without offence, recommend to the perusal
likewise of those of every age. This tract was in-
tended.

DISCOURSE II. 89

But permit me to assure you, my brethren, of a most certain, though
most

tended by the author, to serve as a little manual
for a religious education. And he has the satis-
faction to believe, that his intention has not been
altogether frustrated.

The manifest necessity there is, that a much greater
attention should be paid to that FIRST, and most
IMPORTANT part of education,—RELIGIOUS
INSTRUCTION,—every good man must lament,
and it ought to be the endeavour of every wise
man to rectify. How far, an instruction in Christian
principles, and Religious duties, is made a funda-
mental part of education, in our most public Schools,
I shall not pretend to ascertain. But that to make
great Scholars, rather than good Christians, is the
principal object of consideration in those seminaries,
is a position, which it can be no offence to can-
dour to affirm, because it is one, I apprehend,
which no person will have the boldness to deny.
That ALL is not accomplished, in respect to
Virtue and Religion, which the masters *wish*, or *in-*
tend

90 DISCOURSE III.

most awful truth,—that all who live thus, in a total forgetfulness of the main

tend to perform, may perhaps, in some measure, unavoidably arise, from the number of the scholars, not the negligence of the instructors. When any vice, or fault, is known to be committed, it is perhaps indeed always punished, with a *severity of infliction, which shocks humanity, and an illiberality in the mode of punishment, which disgusts it.* For no such sanguinary correction for single acts, would be necessary to deter youth from habits of vice, were more vigilance used, and more labour employed, in preventing the tendency to crimes, by forming in their minds, the principles of morals, on the eternal base of Christianity. But as perhaps there is no vigilance so active, and no labour so unwearyed, of some few preceptors, which can extend to such a *multitude of pupils,* many crimes are undoubtedly committed, and habits of vice gained, which are never known to the instructors themselves, though they may be subjects of public notoriety to others. From these premises, it will

DISCOURSE II. 91

main purpose of life,—the slaves of passion, and utterly destitute of the
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will not, I trust, be thought an unjustifiable conclusion, that the greater part of *moral education*, which boys receive at great schools, arises, from the influence they have over each other. For, all will unite, for the sake of mutual ease, peace, and comfort, in preventing the worst effects of the more violent passions, of anger, hatred, malice, and revenge; and of the more secret energies, of peevishness, ill-nature, stubbornness, moroseness, and obstinacy. Thus are some of the more ferocious impulses restrained; and at least weakened, if not subdued, by the very connection, such a multitude of boys have with each other. But unfortunately, that very connection, which has a tendency to subdue some passions, has equal efficacy to awaken and strengthen others. By intercourse with each other, the imagination is debauched, before the passions are excited; false glory stimulates to the pursuit of vice, and bad example incites to perseverance. They with eagerness, exchange all
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92 DISCOURSE II.

only true wisdom ;—shrewd, cunning, fagacious, and honourable, as they may think themselves,—THEY will be really as much condemned by the righteous, that is dead,—as those, who live in the commission of the grosser and more notorious vices.— Wise men can not but account their lives madness, and their end to be without honour.

But, so deeply are the passions, which I just now enumerated, rooted in the breasts of the generality of mankind,

the ingenuous modesty of boys, for the unblushing confidence of men ;—and soon unite with all the imbecility of youth, all the profligacy of manhood.

Pudet haec oppubria nobis.

DISCOURSE II. 93

mankind,—so constantly are they the springs, which give elasticity to the minds, both of the noble and the ignoble,—the learned and the unlearned,—that it is to be feared, neither threats have sufficient efficacy to eradicate,—domonstration to subdue,—nor eloquence has even power to shake them. Admonition however may possibly in future prevent, what it knows at present it is impossible to remove.

These passions and principles are indeed increased, but not at first caught, by a contagious commerce with the world. They are at present, with pains imparted, by the most

94 DISCOURSE III.

esteemed modes of MODERN EDUCATION. Thus do they unavoidably "grow with man's growth, and "strengthen with his strength." Whilst the cause therefore subsists, the effects must follow.

Who knows not, what are the first principles of action, which are generally instilled into the minds of youth, for the acquisition of the first elements of learning? Are they not, emulation,—a desire of pecuniary rewards,—a love of praise,—and a thirst for glory? But how can emulation exist, without producing ENVY, either in him who emulates, or in him who is emulated? Can he, who has

DISCOURSE II. 95

has been taught to consider every companion as a rival, see another gain the reward, for which he has panted in vain, without feeling an emotion of envy at his success? Can we wonder then, that this should be a passion, which so often destroys domestic peace, and even national happiness? Can he, who is actuated by the love of gain in youth, fail to acquire avarice in old age? Can we wonder, that he who has been instigated to all his boyish acquisitions, by the love of praise and admiration,—should in manhood pursue every object, which can gratify his vanity? Can we be surprised, that the youth, who has never been inspired

inspired with a desire for the DIS-
COVERY of TRUTH, but has laboured
to attain knowledge from the LOVE
of FAME,—should, from the same
principle of VANITY, in more ad-
vanced years, reject the whole system
of Christianity, or at least every part
of it, which is REPUGNANT to the
OPINIONS he had, BEFORE AC-
QUIRED? When we look around
the world, and behold all the ra-
vages, AMBITION is making, sacri-
ficing to it's own private gratifications,
the happiness of whole nations,—how-
ever we may be shocked at the view of
such calamities, can we be astonished
at the effect; — When we know,
boys are not instructed to pursue
what

DISCOURSE II. 97

what is right,—because it is the will of God;—but, what will procure them honour and glory,—because it is respected by the world. When a most insatiable thirst of glory is excited in the earliest years,—can we wonder, that in a riper age, the blood of millions can not quench it?

When such principles are imbibed in the tender minds of youth, not only by the infection they receive from the authors which they read;—but are even implanted in them, as motives of action, by the hand of their instructors themselves,—it is no wonder, that “on the seat of

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"the scorner," men should treat the precepts even of God, with derision, and, "sitting in the assembly of mockers," set even his threats at defiance.—Such must always be the fatal effects of an HEATHEN EDUCATION, in a CHRISTIAN COUNTRY. Vain and ineffectual then, will be all our attempts to destroy them, unless, we "lay the axe to the root of the tree."

Yet, dire as are the effects, which spread from such principles of action,—there will not be wanting men,—hardy enough to become advocates, for that plan of education, from which

DISCOURSE II. 99

which they flow. And, notwithstanding they see, the operation of the poison in those who taste it, will still maintain, that the stream is pure, and salubrious. They will deny, all the errors imputed to it, with confidence, — and reject the censure of it, with contempt. They will rush forth to the combat, with all the arrogance of unthinking presumption, and all the haughtiness of assured victory, armed only with the COMMON PLACES, — “ *that these passions and motives are not wrong in themselves, but only injurious in their EXCESS.* For, that Christianity does not require the EXTIRPA-

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“ TION,

100 DISCOURSE III

"*TION, only the REGULATION of
these PASSIONS.*"

These opinions, it must be confessed, have been too favourably countenanced, and too hastily admitted by divines, very respectable for their acquisitions in knowledge, and their attainments in virtue. But it is evident, that they had investigated other sciences, with more accuracy, than that of the human mind,—and read other books, with more care and diligence, than those of the New Testament.

Such writers mistake the APPETITES of man, for his PASSIONS.

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DISCOURSE II. 101

The positions stated above, are indeed true, as confined to the former, but altogether false, when extended to the latter. For, who that has attentively considered the principles of Christianity, does not know, that no action can be consonant with it's precepts, whatever it's OUTWARD FORM, or CONSEQUENCES may be, —which has not for it's motive and it's principle, the LOVE OF GOD, or of MAN? THESE are the PRINCIPLES, which characteristically distinguish the MORALS OF CHRISTIANITY, from all the HEATHEN SYSTEMS OF MORALITY.

In the ethics of the latter indeed,

a certain combination of the passions blended together, and exactly balanced with each other, were the grand principles of them all, (except of the Stoics) from Aristotle, down to Cicero. Because, they could not otherwise, with the least plausibility, have ever maintained, that VIRTUE, and the GREATEST GOOD, were ONE, and the SAME THING. But, the Stoics, perceiving that all the misery of mankind arose from their passions, and were the necessary and unavoidable effects of their existence, would willingly have erected a fabric of morality, without building upon them, as a foundation. They forgot, however, to consider,

confider,—that when they had extirpated these motives of action,—though together with them they should even be able to banish from the breasts of men, all sorrow under the disappointments of human life,—they likewise at the same time, took away every principle of agency, and only exchanged the deliriums of a fever, for the stupor of a lethargy.

Not so,—CHRISTIANITY.

IT substitutes in the room of the passions,—the noblest and most powerful AFFECTIONS.—It thus not only eradicates the principal causes of our misery,

misery, but pours also the most healing balm of consolation over those sorrows, which it does not remove. It not only imparts happiness to us in this world, by the anticipation of that transcendent happiness, which is to come ;—but likewise opens to the mind, new sources of enjoyment, which it gently impels it to partake. Enjoyments, the most pure and beneficial, both in their causes and their effects ; and most elevated and permanent, in their intensity, and duration.*

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* This comparison between HEATHEN ETHICS, and CHRISTIAN MORALS, will be further treated in an intended work, before mentioned, in a note. See also the tract on CONFIRMATION, and my COMMENCEMENT SERMON.

The PRINCIPLES OF MORALS therefore, when DISJOINED from CHRISTIANITY, form no firm or secure foundation. So totally erroneous is the opinion of some, that nothing can be added to them, nor taken from them; that, on the contrary, their basis is as weak, as their super-structure is mean. They likewise, who suppose, that Christianity requires only the REGULATION, not the EXTIRPATION of our passions, must build their opinion upon one, or both, of the following errors.—Either they must imagine, that it is the OUTWARD FORM of an action, not the INWARD PRINCIPLE, which constitutes

it GOOD OR BAD;—OR they must conceive, that man can derive no pleasure from the POSSESSION of an object,—FOR the attainment of which he feels NO PASSION.

The FORMER, is too gross and palpable an error, to merit a confutation. Barely to mention it, is to expose it. For who knows not, that he who confers the greatest and most universal good, when impelled by FAME, AVARICE, or AMBITION,—*has his reward*,—and has no title to future happiness,—because, he has not performed a single act of goodness.

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DISCOURSE II. 107

The LATTER, is not so obvious; —because it arises only from an ignorance of the principles of the human mind, in which the passions have their source. Now, these have their origin, (I mean such as I have just mentioned) either from the real, or supposed capacity of some objects, to give us pleasure. But, the pleasure therefore, must either be felt, or supposed, before the passion can exist. (Which indeed constitutes the ESSENTIAL difference between a PASSION and an APPETITE.) And, it depends upon the comparative intensity of that pleasure with others, —whether the passion ever is, or is not stimulated into being, when

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the object excites so much pleasure, (from the want of a counterbalance from other pleasures) that we are UNEASY without the possession of it,—then it generates passion;—and a disappointment in the gratification of it,—produces misery.† The very same

† Mr. Locke, in supposing that UNEASINESS, not the GREATER APPARENT GOOD, determines the WILL, or, (as I have observed in my SERMON upon PROVIDENCE) we should rather say, determines the MIND TO CHOOSE,—has confounded a PARTICULAR with a GENERAL CAUSE, or rather he has mistaken,—ONE and the SAME cause, operating under dissimilar circumstances, for two DIFFERENT CAUSES. Where two objects are presented to us for our choice, for one of which we have a passion, and for the other we have none, we certainly make choice of the former, in preference to the latter. Because,

same object therefore, may impart pleasure to another, when he happens to be in the possession of it, though his mind being engrossed with higher affections, he delights not in it with passion. But he can suffer no misery from its absence, —because he never feels that goad of uneasiness, which stimulates others to its acquirement.

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Thus

Because, whatever real greater intrinsic good the latter may have, to minds unimpelled by passion, —to one under its impulse,—the removal of the present uneasiness,—is,—the greater apparent good. And it is only in these cases, where some passion or appetite intervenes, that uneasiness exists. This however, is perhaps the slightest, of all that great man's errors, on the human mind.

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Thus then, FAME, POWER, and RICHES, may minister pleasures to the GOOD MAN, as they furnish him with opportunities of multiplying the acts, which flow from his highest affections. But they who from hence suppose, that VANITY, AMBITION, or AVARICE, can be inmates of his breast, are led into a mistake of the colour of the objects, from the disease of their own minds. And thus, do these very objects,—to which,—the passions of some,—called in the language of the world, MORAL MEN, are *solely* directed for the acquisition of happiness,—not only bring upon them, much pain, from which, the *good* are *free*;—but

DISCOURSE III. 111

but even impart to them less pleasure, than they confer upon,—the true Christian. At the same time, let it be remembered also,—that the good man has moreover, for his peculiar property,—those refined and elevated enjoyments—which spring from the LOVE OF GOD and MAN,—to which the others have no access,—and if they had, would want faculties to taste.

Christian morality therefore, does not consist in the performance of certain actions, but in the influence of certain intentions. Not even in the exercise of certain habits, but in

in the acquisition of certain affections.* Though therefore, the very same outward actions were even to be uniformly performed by Infidels and Christians, yet that inward principle, which by it's presence, gives perfection to the one, by it's absence, takes away all virtue from the other.

From hence then, it follows, that

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* Those writers therefore, who have described men, "as only bundles of habits," have not expressed themselves more inelegantly, than unphilosophically. They might, with equal instruction to their readers, have called them "bundles of ideas." For who, upon reflection, can not distinguish between an habit of devotion, and a love of God,—between an habit of beneficence, and a love of mankind?

the Christian, who hopes for the enjoyment of real good, either here or hereafter, must banish from his breast, all those passions, which, others ignorantly cherish, as the means to their present happiness. Ignorantly, I say,—for, does not even the experience of every age, nation, and even of every individual evince,—that whoever seeks for happiness, from the enjoyments the passions can procure,—will find,—that either all his hopes are blasted, or that his expectations have been frustrated,—that the accomplishment of his designs is without content, or the gratification of his wishes is without enjoyment,— that the pains which

harras

114 DISCOURSE III.

harrass him are without consolation,—and even the accumulation of all temporal goods—without happiness.

These passions however, must not only be eradicated, but the Christian must likewise, with God's assistance, plant, and nurture in their places, the affections of LOVE towards GOD, and towards MAN,—by them, he must fill up every void, and craving of his soul. Such a LOVE to MANKIND, as flowing along in it's several different streams, will diffuse comfort, peace, and happiness, not only to our relations, friends, neighbours, and countrymen, but to every sect, tribe, and denomination

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of men,—however separated from us by distance of place, or estranged from us by alienation of heart;—however hostile to us in their provocations, or malicious against us in their persecutions.

Such a LOVE to GOD, as will light in our breasts a flame, not only able to consume all the dross of human passions, but to incite us to the performance of all his commands,—with a fervor,—and to a submission to all his dispensations,—with a confidence,—which no human object can inspire, and none but a Christian soul can conceive.

From hence then it follows, that Christianity leads us to a system of conduct, which not only imparts to us the highest degree of happiness we are capable of attaining upon earth, and which has the promise of an inconceivable felicity in heaven, but that it becomes likewise in this state, an actual PREPARATION OR EDUCATION of the mind for another, and is intended to form in it a CAPACITY *here*, for those enjoyments it promises to its sincere votaries hereafter.

Both states then, are as intimately connected with each other,—as childhood with youth,—youth with manhood,—

DISCOURSE II. 117

hood,—and manhood with old age.

For, as the happiness in each succeeding scene of human life; must arise out of the dispositions attained in each preceding one ;—so the happiness of our eternal state,—will depend upon the dispositions we have acquired, in the whole of our progression through these several successive stages. That God therefore, has so constituted this world,—as to make it serve only as a SCHOOL, or PLACE OF EDUCATION ;—and that all the occurrences which happen to us in it,—are intended only as acts of discipline,—to qualify us for another. That all it's

118 DISCOURSE II.

goods, are principally meant as trials of our present dispositions, or as incentives to higher degrees of virtue ;—and all it's evils,—as correctives of our present habits, or punishments for our former vices.

They therefore miserably misconceive of the NATURE of Christianity, who imagine, that it requires only the performance of certain actions, or even a certain regular uniformity of conduct in our present state, as the condition of our being removed to a PLACE, which will impart to us perfect, and eternal happiness. For, it is not merely to the PLACE, and it's ADJUNCTS, to which

which we are to owe that happiness; but likewise to the MIND, and it's AFFECTIONS. For, were there to be placed before a mind, all the objects which are fitted to produce the highest felicity,—yet if that mind has no affections in unison with those objects,—they will be totally unable to impart any gratification. It may therefore be affirmed, not only without impiety, but even with the most profound reverence to God,—that it is not in the power even of OMNIPOTENCE,—to give to a mind,—inflamed with the malignant passions,—happiness,—even in heaven. Hence also, it is,—that REPENTANCE is made so essential

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120 DISCOURSE III.

a part of the Christian system. For it is the entire CHANGE OF MIND,—not the DURATION of that change here,—which will qualify us to derive felicity from the pure enjoyments, which await the true Christian, in a future state of eternal existence.

Our sublime poet and divine then shows himself equally excellent in both characters, when he makes the fallen Arch-angel say, “The MIND
“ is it’s OWN PLACE, and in IT—
“ SELF can make, a HEAVEN—OF
“ HELL,—a HELL—OF HEAVEN.”

It is therefore abundantly evident,
that

DISCOURSE II. 121

that our happiness, in our present and future state, must arise from the similitude of our dispositions, and from the similarity of our enjoyments, in both. We must now, both for the sake of our present and future happiness plant and nurture those affections, which it will be then our eternal felicity to heighten and improve. And consequently, that the mind, which derives no pleasure from them here, can never be fitted for those enjoyments, which are to arise from them hereafter.

He therefore, whose breast was never dilated with good-will towards mankind,

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mankind, and every living creature; — and whose heart never glowed with filial love towards his Creator and Redeemer; — he who — has never drawn from those fountains of affection, his happiness upon earth; — can never participate of that pure and elevated bliss, which flows incessantly from them in heaven.

But, on the contrary, they who have cherished and nurtured those affections in their bosoms, and made them the motives of all their actions, — have ALREADY PERFECTED themselves in TRUE WISDOM; — and even in YOUTH, — have attained to all that is HONOURABLE
or

DISCOURSE III. 123

OR DESIRABLE IN OLD AGE.
THEIR EDUCATION IS COMPLETED,
—and God therefore often trans-
lates them to that higher state of
happiness,—for the enjoyment of
which, they have been thus early
QUALIFIED, by their own mental
application, and the assistance of his
grace.

The generality of mankind indeed,
who look up to such uncommon
excellence, with an astonished and
aching sight, are not always able
accurately to discern all it's perfec-
tion, or fully to comprehend even
the possibility of so early an attain-
ment.

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They

124 DISCOURSE II.

They are apt to imagine,—that such can not possibly have attained to the utmost consummation of virtue;—because they have never experienced those evils of life, which they who proceed further along it's path, are generally obliged to encounter. But it is evident, that they who reason thus, neither know the end, for which afflictions are sent, nor the qualities which constitute Christian perfection. For, much are they mistaken, if they entertain any idea, that affliction has any other end, than to reclaim men from evil, and to cure the diseases of their souls. Some of the gentlest of them, are sent to extract the passions by degrees,—

DISCOURSE II. 125

grees,—and others, the most severe, to amputate them with celerity. That youthful mind therefore, which has already, by the divine efficacy of Christianity, rooted out all it's passions, and is alone actuated with a filial love to God, and a fraternal love to it's fellow-creatures, wants not even the aid of medicine;—having no remaining disease to cure, nor any additional health to acquire. It has attained to the highest possible wisdom. It is assimilated, and for that reason removed, to “the “society of just men made perfect.”

Those in more advanced years,
who have still to learn, this only
goes home

126 DISCOURSE II.

TRUE WISDOM, and to practice THIS only PERFECT, because ONLY CHRISTIAN MORALITY, should not only be constant in praising God, for the length of time, and frequency of opportunity, his kindness vouchsafes them, for it's acquisition; — but be even continually giving him thanks for his mercy, in sending them those chastisements, which may qualify them for it's attainment. They should consider TRIALS, — as evident marks of GOD'S FAVOUR,—and even PUNISHMENTS,—as undoubted proofs of HIS LOVE.

Whoever would avoid the con-
demnation

DISCOURSE II. 127

damnation in the text,—whoever would be happy here and hereafter,—must thus think, and thus act. The affections of PIETY and BE-
NEVOLENCE,—to which,—we shall, under God,—owe our happiness in the next world,—are equally necessary, as PREPARATORY TO THAT END,—as they are likewise ESSEN-
TIAL TO OUR HAPPINESS IN THIS LIFE.

Thus thought, and thus acted,—that BLESSED SPIRIT,—which lately departed from amongst us;—who, being lent us only long enough,—to teach us how to live,—and how to die,—is early advanced to the
glory

128 DISCOURSE II.

glory and happiness, of being an angel in heaven;—though as she was one of the purest,—so she was likewise one of the happiest of human beings,—whilst on earth. *Her youth* being soon perfected,—will condemn the many years, and old age,—of the unrighteous.

Far,—far distant from her gentle and tranquil bosom,—were all those selfish passions,—of ANGER,—PRIDE,—ENVY,—and VANITY,—which tear the parent breast, that nurtures them;—which render fellow-creatures enemies to each other,—and can only fit those who cherish them,—for the company of fallen angels,
and

DISCOURSE II. 129

and evil spirits. *She* performed no action,—*she* indulged no thought,—*she* cherished no affection,—which did not impart good-will to all her fellow-beings here,—and which tended not to assimilate her,—to that society of the blessed,—with whom, to live hereafter,—was the unvarying aim, and first wish of her soul,—and the most clearing hope, and stedfast anchor of her heart.

Whenever therefore,—*she* heard any one complain of the sameness,—the tediousness,—inconveniences,—or disquietudes of life,—*she* used to observe—that whoever looked upon this life as an **END**,—and fought for

130 DISCOURSE II.

for happiness in THAT ALONE,— might indeed with reason complain of it's disappointments,— and it's miseries. But, whoever viewed it in it's TRUE LIGHT,—as the MEANS OR PATH to a FUTURE STATE OF HAPPINESS,—might (she thought) enjoy much pleasure,— comfort,— and satisfaction,—even in this world.

For, SHE not only BELIEVED upon the words of the apostle, that “ godliness is profitable unto all things; having the promise of “ the life that now is, and that “ which is to come;”—but,—she knew it likewise by EXPERIENCE,— she felt it glowing in her bosom.

Hence

DISCOURSE II. 131

Hence sprung, that pleasing clear-
fulness, which constantly beamed
from her countenance, and diffused
rays of gladness all around her.—
It arose not in her,—from the quick,
but uncertain impulse of animal spi-
rits,—but proceeded from that sun-
shine of content and peace,—which
perpetually irradiating,—was con-
stantly likewise reflecting,—from her
mind.

LOVE to GOD, and CHARITY,
or KINDNESS, to MANKIND,—were
the ruling passions of her soul;—
the pole-stars,—by which her whole
conduct was regulated;—the directors
of her every thought,—word,—and
deed,

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deed,—throughout this life's,—short,—but to her,—most delightful voyage.

The FORMER, led her often,—secretly to withdraw from the family,—when she thought she could do it without observation,—to hold converse with her Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. To pour out to THEM,—when she thought herself liable to no intrusion,—her ardent thanksgivings for all their mercies,—her earnest intreaties for the continuance of their grace,—in aid of her own unwearied endeavours, to persevere in true holiness;—and,—to offer up,—her most fervent supplications, for whatever,—they saw best,—

best,—for herself,—her relations,—friends,—and all mankind.

Once,—when she was unexpectedly found, thus employed, by a servant, (for she could not always secure herself in these retirements, as she wished, from observation or intrusion,) and being told by the observer,—that SHE WAS MOST ASSUREDLY *always fit to die*; she replied,—without either any affected disavowal of the truth of this remark,—or the least appearance of pleasure in the encomium thus bestowed;—*if that be really your opinion of me,—let me beseech you,—to go and prepare yourself likewise.*

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— Her constant attendance upon every performance of the public services of the church, and on the celebration of the holy sacrament,— her earnest attention and fervent devotion likewise, upon such occasions,— must have been noticed by some in this congregation,— though it was entirely unwished for by her ;— and however striking,— was by far, the slightest proof she gave of her piety and virtue. Though never did she *reluctantly* comply with any wish, of those, to whom, of earthly beings, she owed the highest duty, — and which,— she always paid in a manner, the most inexpressibly tender, — and the most unspeakably affectionate ;

tionate ;—but when, from fear of danger to her life,—they intreated her to remain at *home*, instead of coming to join the congregation of Christians,—in this sacred place of public worship.

Her CHARITY to her fellow-creatures, induced her, to set apart for them,—and to devote wholly to their relief,—a sum,—which was given her, for the purpose of decorating her person, or the indulging herself in any other pleasure, which usually most allure those of her age, and station. But, as her MIND, not her PERSON,—was the FIRST OBJECT OF HER CARE,—and all
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136 DISCOURSE II.

her HIGHEST JOYS sprung from the PERFORMANCE of her DUTY to GOD, and MAN,—she most highly gratified herself by doing,—what, she thought,—most acceptable to her Creator,—because,—it was most useful to her fellow-creatures.

Her BENEVOLENCE and TENDERNESS,—which were so constantly conspicuous, in the sweet expression of her countenance, and the mild dignity, yet soft humility, of her address,—shone forth, in every thought,—word,—and look,—even—*to the last moment* of her life. Her thoughts were attentive, and anxious,—*even then*,—for the inconvenience others.

DISCOURSE II. 137

others might sustain,—by their attendance upon her. Her very last words,—though strongly declaratory of the perfect ease,—tranquillity,—and comfort,—she felt in her own soul, were tenderly expressive of the pain she should give her mother,—the most exemplary of mothers (for why should mere punctilio, restrain me, upon such an occasion, from giving the praise so justly due,)—when she should no longer be able,—to return an articulate answer,—to her much-loved voice. This however, she would attempt,—though her frame, as she herself foresaw, was too much enfeebled,—to execute her purpose.—But,—having fixed her eyes

eyes upon her beloved parent,—with a smile of ineffable sweetness;—in that smile,—without the heaving of a sigh,—her spirit,—was translated.

Even the inanimate corse likewise,—still faithful to it's late heavenly inhabitant,—retained it's wonted smile of benignity and benevolence,—till it was for ever inclosed, from human sight.

From this blessed example,—let gray hairs—learn wisdom,—and youth—perfection. For, if ever human being was perfect,—she was a complete model of all the perfection, the Deity can require:—because, it

was

DISCOURSE II. 139

was all,—humanity can attain.—I speak it not, I assure you,—from the partiality of a parent, — but, from the most criticising investigation, and most rigorous scrutiny,—that she was not only SPOTLESS,—BUT BESIDES, BEING IN POSSESSION OF ALL THOSE OTHER ORNAMENTS OF NATURE,—WHICH MOST FORCIBLY ATTRACT THE ATTENTION, AND MOST FIRMLY ENGAGE THE ESTEEM OF THE WORLD,—SHE WAS ENDOWED WITH EVERY MORAL VIRTUE, AND EVERY CHRISTIAN GRACE,—AND ALTOGETHER REFINED,—FROM EVERY THE LEAST ALLOY,—OF ANY EARTHLY FOIBLE,—OR HUMAN FRAILTY.

For,

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For, when even with the most anxious solicitude for her recovery,—we implored of heaven, most ardently to continue to us her precious life;—WE COULD NEITHER PLEAD OPPORTUNITY FOR HER REPENTANCE,— NOR EVEN TIME FOR HER BETTER PREPARATION,—TO MEET OUR BLESSED LORD,—AT HIS COMING TO JUDGMENT,—WHEN, THE SECRETS OF ALL HEARTS SHALL BE DISCLOSED.

What better supplication, then, can I constantly offer up to heaven,—for YOU, my beloved brethren,—MY FAMILY,—and MY SELF,—but, that we, in the exercise of every Christian

DISCOURSE II. 141

Christian duty, may live as she lived,—and that we may likewise,—in the invigorating hope of eternal happiness,—die the death of the righteous, as she died.—Death being quite disarmed of his sting to HER;—and that the beginning of the lives of the young,—and the latter end of all,—may be,—like HER'S.

But, my brethren, let me beseech you,—always to remember,—that it is CHRISTIANITY only,—which can thus exalt human nature.—That the volumes of HOLY WRIT alone contain TRUE WISDOM.—That all other LITERARY ACQUISITIONS, which

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are not made subservient to the better understandings of those writings, and the practice of their precepts,—are at best, but SPECIOUS TRIFLES,—and often only impart a SELF-SUFFICIENT IGNORANCE;—and that every other fabric of MORALITY, whether Grecian, Roman, or Gothic, are but splendid monuments of HUMAN WEAKNESS.

But let me likewise implore you, never to forget,—that even the most perfect of human beings,—not even one, who whilst on earth, approached so near to the purity of an angel in heaven,—as SHE,—who so lately left us,—to mix in their society, and

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and to join in eternal Hallelujahs to "HIM who sitteth on the throne,"—is entitled to the rewards reserved for the righteous,—from HER OWN merits,—but, from the MERCY OF GOD,—through the MERITS and MEDIATION, of JESUS CHRIST.

APPENDIX.

and the following

A P P E N D I X.

HAVING in the foregoing discourse, almost as it were, involuntarily paid a tribute of praise, justly due to the excellent mother of the departed angel, to whose precept and example she was, under God, so much indebted for her perfection;—I shall not, I hope, be thought guilty of any indecorum, in subjoining the following lines, written some years since, and which were occasioned by her much-approved work,—entitled, the “ EXEMPLARY MOTHER.”

To

To the AUTHORRESS of
"THE EXEMPLARY MOTHER,"
From her HUSBAND.

Say, to what mimic scenes did fancy rove,
To paint this image of maternal love ?
Say, did some *Angel* sketch the fair design,
To show to mortals, what is worth divine ?
Such virtues sure, and such celestial charms,
Ne'er bloom'd on earth, nor bless'd a
mortal's arms !

Yes,—*truth* avows, what *fancy's* pencil
drew,
And boasts the bright ORIGINAL in you.

The

The following CHARACTER,

Was written by a Gentleman,

*Who is universally esteemed and beloved
by those who know him, both for
his talents and his virtues. But,
as from diffidence, he wishes his
name to be concealed, he sacrifices
to his virtue, the reputation due to
his abilities.*

ON TUESDAY Evening, January
31st, 1786, died Miss CHAR-
LOTTE MARIA COOPER, eldest
Daughter of the Rev. Dr. COOPER,
Minister of Great Yarmouth.

Posthumous panegyric, either from the ignorance, or partiality of writers, has been, for the most part, so injudiciously distributed, that any attempt to describe a virtuous, and exalted character, is regarded, by the majority of mankind, with only a cold, and sceptical indifference. The rule of “not speaking ill of ‘the dead,’” though it, undoubtedly, had it’s origin in the tenderest affections of human nature, has itself been destructive of the good it was intended to produce: the reader is now led to expect fiction, and it is the remark of a very distinguished poet, that,

“Praise undeserved turns satire most severe.”

The

The writer of the following pages, seriously lamenting the folly he condemns, considers himself as secure against any temptation that could possibly offer, to seduce him into a like injudicious conduct. The knowledge, that such evils do sometimes exist, is not, however, to terrify him into the opposite error. He, who would give truth to the world, must be under no slavish controul, from a fear of misapprehension in the weak, or malice in the wicked: Wherever he perceives uncommon merit, justice demands the tribute of uncommon applause. To discern with perspicacity, and commend with zeal, are qualities far from being

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repugnant : Virtue, like the sun, warms while it illuminates.

If then, in the first instance, we direct our attention to those elegant endowments, which are more peculiarly conferred by nature, and polite education, we shall find this lady to have possessed them in a very eminent degree ; though there still appeared, even to those, whose modes of thinking led them to contemplate no higher species of excellence, something in the manner of Miss Cooper, that gave more than usual grace to their favourite attainments. Those pure principles, which the most virtuous education, and habits, had silently

silently instilled into her mind, shed their own soft influence over every action of her life. All felt the power, though all knew not whence it was derived ; but wrapt in wonder, like the brethren of Jubal, they revered in silence, what they could not comprehend.

But beside her possessing, in so eminent a manner, all the lesser ornaments of the female character, her mind seems to have borne the stamp of an exalted, and peculiar excellence. Various, and even opposite, qualities appeared to combine, in order to render her complete ; or rather, they centred in the exact point

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point of perfection. Though endowed with the softest sensibility, it was tinctured with no weakness. To an uncommon quickness of penetration, and solidity of judgment, she joined the most engaging candour; her charity being ever ready to throw a veil over those weaknesses, which her perspicacity obliged her to perceive. And, though the liveliness of her imagination, added to an uncommon force of understanding, enabled her to command applause, either by the brilliancy, or strength of her observations; yet were these talents never exerted, when they could possibly be productive of the slightest pain; or be found in the least inconsistent

consistent with the nicest female decorum. In the circle of her most intimate friends, she would, indeed, sometimes indulge in those sprightly sallies of fancy, that delight while they improve; that innocent railing, which confers an envied distinction upon it's favoured object.

But, however eminently qualified to discern the real merit of every character, this ability seemed totally to disappear, when she would apply it to the investigation of her own. Of the important duty of self-examination, so rigid was her observance, and so extreme was she to discover something amiss, that her virtues were

were hidden from herself in a cloud of imaginary imperfections. Her diffidence was, however, easy to be distinguished from that affectation of humility, by which some appear solicitous to persuade others, without being themselves convinced: she believed the fallacious representations she gave, and therefore afforded to her friends, that most delightful of offices, the dissipating those mists of error, which timidity had raised, and of shewing virtue her own splendid image. But, though she might not be displeased with such tributes of ingenuous praise, imagine not, that from hence was opened in her mind, any avenue to the insinuations of flattery.

flattery. The penetration of her understanding, so plainly delineated in her "mind-illumin'd face," joined with a certain dignity of manner, ever deterred wise men from the attempt, and fools were made sensible of it's inefficacy.

It may be asked, from what sources could such consummate perfection arise? From that source alone, from whence perfection can arise. She employed the excellent understanding she possessed, in learning, and digesting the important truths of Christianity, and in laying them as the basis of her whole conduct. Religion, it may be said, was her ruling passion,

sion, as well as principle ;—a religion, equally free from the deceitful ardour of enthusiasm, and the desponding gloom of superstition. It neither offended the gay by a stern severity, nor the wise by ostentatious intrusion ; nor did it, on the other hand, give a moment's alarm to the truly pious, by a seeming want of fervor ; but, on every proper occasion, displayed the truest magnanimity. The duty to her God, she well knew, demanded her first care ; and to hear it, unconcernedly, either ridiculed in it's practice, or vilified in it's principles, was, in her apprehension, to add to a very high degree

gree of guilt, the accumulated ignominy of desertion and cowardice.
It will not, then, seem wonderful, that under such guidance, having a mind constantly fixed on things above, and reposing, as it were, "on the bosom of her God," she should regard the pleasures of this life, with the indifference of a guest, that was tarrying but for a day. The follies and temptations of the world had little power to disturb, or wound. Their shafts could not but fall impotent, from such divine armour.
But, splendid as her character was,

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we should deprive it of its greatest lustre, a lustre, which even adorns, and dignifies human nature, were we to omit the fortitude she displayed in the last scenes of her life. In these most awful moments, and, indeed, during the whole of her gradual decline, we saw her submitting to the divine decree, with a resignation, and confidence, that would have astonished the stoic, appalled the infidel, and enlarged the most exalted hopes of the pious Christian.

If this tranquillity was, at any time, interrupted, it was only from her love to those tender friends, whose sorrow on her account, she

was

was ever most anxious to alleviate. This kindness of attention to those about her, was indeed evident, in her latest moments. Even, after her tongue had lost it's office, her still-expressive eyes cast a look of the most affectionate solicitude upon her amiable and afflicted mother. They then sunk in night ;—and she expired soon after ;—her countenance remaining illumined, even in death, with it's wonted smile of benignity and affection.

What an instructive lesson should this example prove to all, who were more immediately within it's influence ; and surely, the mere knowledge of such excellence cannot but

be serviceable to the cause of virtue and religion. Every person, capable of reflection, must think those principles of the highest importance, which could enable a lady, but just entered into her twenty-first year, with not only every want supplied, and every wish fulfilled; but placed too in a state of affluence, that invited her to partake of every elegance; surrounded by numerous friends, who dearly loved her; blessed with the tenderest parents, who knew and cherished her every worth; so that her whole life may be said to have been one constant reciprocation of delight; and inspired too with the liveliest sense of gratitude to God towards a world so dear to that

that God, who had thus rendered her, as she frequently declared, the happiest of human beings:—Those principles, I say, must, surely, be of the first importance, by the influence of which, a lady, thus eminently distinguished, could, with all her affections to her loved relatives, strong even in death, be content to resign, in so early a period of life, this abundant accumulation of earthly good, even without a sigh.

However imperfectly the above copy may express it's author's sense of the excellent original, he is still aware,

aware, that to many, it will seem to display any assemblage of good qualities, of which they will be able to form no idea. The mental eye of some, as well as the corporeal, can look no farther than to the grosser objects. To offer apology, or reason, to such persons, would be either cowardly, or insulting. It is not, indeed, possible, but that any description of exalted character, must be unacceptable to many;—from causes, as deeply rooted, as the depravity of our nature. Folly, vice, and irreligion, have a very extensive influence in the world, and, as every example of wisdom, virtue, and piety, must necessarily brand

brand them with additional infamy, they find an interest in keeping up a general charge of delusion, and encouraging, as much as in their power, a spirit of incredulity.

The present writer cannot but lament these evils, under which he labours ; evils, that will be likely to oppress him, in exact proportion to the fidelity of his narration ; for the more truly he may have delineated the virtues of this much-esteemed lady, the more will it seem the sport of fancy.

He feels, however, a solid consolation in the assurance, that all
w those,

those, who knew her excellencies, will love to dwell on the theme; that thanks will rise even to him, from the purest hearts; mingled, indeed, with regret, at his imperfect delineation. Those, who had not the felicity of her acquaintance, will, he hopes, believe him, when he solemnly asserts, that he has advanced nothing, of the truth of which he does not feel a firm conviction. His wish has not been so much to blazon the merits of an individual, as to promote the cause of virtue, he, therefore, having had no inducement to deceive, can have little reason to fear the just censure that would await him, were he found to have

have concealed deformity in a garb of fiction. His anxiety arises, indeed, from a very different source. Conscious of inability, he feels the liveliest apprehension, lest, by depreciating the most perfect example of human excellence, he should render it a less striking object of the world's regard, and apparently less worthy its imitation.

The

The following E L E G Y,

(Which has already appeared in a public Paper,)

Is the Production of a LADY,

Who has given the world several other specimens of her abilities, and proofs of the goodness of her heart. Her "FRANKLY's RAMBLES," I would wish particularly to recommend to every one's perusal. They have, indeed, been sometimes objected to, as imitations of Sterne, of whom, the world says, in a manner which often silences dispute, though it does not convince the judgment, that he is an author who is inimitable. But, when this oracular decision is examined, it is found to be evidently false, and it is scarcely to be doubted, that it is nonsense. For, his beauties may certainly be imitated, though

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though not perhaps equalled, and, God forbid, that an imitation of his faults should be attempted.

The compliment to the editor is suffered to remain in this republication of the Elegy and Address, as a proof of the strength of the lady's partiality; as he has shown in the Dedication, to whom the same words might have been applied without a compliment.

To Mrs. and Dr. C.

*FRIEND of my heart: sweet sister of my soul:
Accept this tribute, sign'd with many a tear;
Meant the keen pangs of anguish to controul,
And prove a gentle solace to thy care.*

*And thou, revered, respected, best of men;
Thou fost'ring parent of my artless muse;
Would that the feeble efforts of my pen,
Could one soft drop of lenient balm diffuse!*

Then

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*Then would my heart exult,—my grateful heart,
That bends sincere at friendship's sacred shrine;
That ever in thy lot has shared a part,
Joy'd when you joy'd, and made your sorrows mine.*

E L E G Y.

What means this burst of woe? From that sad bell
Surely I hear a more than *solemn* sound;
With more than wonted awe it strikes its knell,
And flings a gloom of horror all around!

Too sure its tidings speak no common doom;
Youth, sweetness, virtue, clad in loveliest form,
Await untimely now the opening tomb,
Gently they sunk beneath the sudden storm.

Now droop, pale lilly, on thy bed of earth;
A fairer flower has death's chill blast destroy'd;
O! venture not to put thy blossoms forth,
Save that thou be to deck her grave employ'd.

Know

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Know thou, vain rose, howe'er thou art approv'd,
Lovelier than opening roses was the maid ;
But from this world of sorrow is remov'd,
To climes unchanging, where she ne'er can fade.

What ! though we all a common loss deplore,
E'en such a daughter, Roman fires would prize,
Think not the child of duty is no more ;--
Earth's boast is but transplanted to the skies.

Pure as unsullied snow, her spotless mind
Led her unerring through the paths of truth ;
Each VIRTUE deck'd her, with each GRACE
entwin'd,
And age learn'd wisdom from the lips of youth.

Sweet MERCY was the inmate of her breast ;
While meekest MODESTY each look inspired ;
FAITH and CELESTIAL LOVE each fear
repress'd ;
And at DEATH's call, she, in a SMILE
expired.

Matured

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Matured for heaven, by pious converse led,
No other scenes than those of bliss she knew ;
HOPE wav'd his pinions o'er her dying bed,
And sERAPHS caught her sPIRIT ere it flew.

Round heaven's high throne myriads of angels throng ;
Another angel comes ! each wafts the sound ;
Then to th' Almighty soars the grateful song,
And Hallelujahs through th' expanse rebound.

E. B.

The

(1719)
A.D.

The following ELEGY,
Is a Production of the eldest BROTHER
of the deceased.

*Who, I am happy to say, is still more
nearly united to his departed sister, by
kindred of mind, than even by the ties
of nature.*

E L E G Y.

LO! where in yonder glory fringed sky,
(Creative vision to my soul is giv'n!)
Some Angel's shape soft melting in the eye,
Wafts a pure spirit to the realms of heav'n.

That spirit once illum'd a sister's form,
Shone thro' the clear expression of the face ;
Glow'd in the heart, with native ardor warm,
And gave to beauty many a nameless grace.

Her soul was spotless as the snow untraced,
Her form the purest transcript of her mind :
She liv'd,—she died,—devoted to her God,—
In life obedient,—and in death resign'd.

O ! say what more can piety require ?
O ! say what more description can express ?
Was she not all a parent could desire,
Or heav'n could grant when most dispos'd to bless ?

And is she gone ?—This dear angelic maid ;
This ray emitted from the source of light ?
Low in the dust the lovely corse is laid,
The beam is dimm'd by temporary night.

Weep then, ye few, to whom her worth was known !
Ye friends of virtue, sorrow o'er the bier !
A brother's heart shall answer groan for groan !
A brother's eye shall pay you tear for tear !

Alas !

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Alas! my Charlotte; wilt thou ne'er return?
Ne'er with thy friends the paths of pleasure tread?
Then see thy brothers, sisters, parents mourn,
And sigh to howling winds, that Charlotte's dead!

But soft ;—methinks a soothing voice I hear;
From yon dark cloud a flood of splendor breaks;
Mellifluous accents sink into my ear;—
A more than mortal to my fancy speaks!

- “ Restrain!—restrain!—the gulping stream of woe!
- “ Blind son of weakness, and frail child of dust!
- “ Raise thy gross thoughts from images below!
- “ Expand thy soul; and own thy Maker just!

- “ Ordain'd as patterns to misguided man,
- “ Some sainted spirits to the world are lent;
- “ In mortal forms to forward heav'ns high plan,
- “ By grace instructed, as by wisdom sent.

- “ Such the sweet maid you wantonly deplore!—
- “ On earth awhile in pity doom'd to stay;
- “ Her life's pure precept bade mankind adore;
- “ Her soul now triumphs in eternal day.”

Corrected

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Corrected thus,—I bow before *his* shrine,
Who knows when best to punish,—when to spare :
Affliction sinks in gratitude divine ;
Complainings melt in ardency of pray'r !

O ! may my life be like my Charlotte's blest,
My mind as tranquil, and my soul as pure !
Increasing fervour supplicates the rest !—
A death as placid !—a reward as sure !

F I N I S.

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